NOAA REGIONAL COLLABORATION
Central Region

Coordinating Fresh Watersheds in the Central United States

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA's) Regional Collaboration effort is a flexible network that promotes coordination of NOAA's diverse assets within a region and collaboration with external partners to respond to our stakeholders' shared regional concerns. The eight Regional Teams—Alaska, Central, Great Lakes, Gulf of Mexico, North Atlantic, Pacific Islands, Southeast & Caribbean, and Western—led by a senior integrator acting as the Regional Team Lead and assisted by a full-time Regional Coordinator, are actively involved in nationally significant efforts that help overcome political and institutional barriers.

Regional Team Lead: *Lynn Maximuk, National Weather Service, Director, Central Region*

Regional Coordinator: *Bethany Hale*

PHOTO TOP: Wolf in snow near Vail, Colorado
CREDIT: Brendan McCarthy

PHOTO RIGHT: Storm cloud
CREDIT: Eric A. Hegelson

Why is coordination of fresh watersheds needed?

Coordination is essential to improving dialogue and leveraging resources between partners across a large portion of the United States.

The NOAA Central Regional Collaboration Team sponsored a "Corn and Climate" workshop in September 2008, bringing NOAA's expertise to a group working toward alternative fuels and the green economy. This workshop also resulted in a meeting with Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D-SD), where this work and Team Collaboration with Tribal governments were both highlights of discussion. The key outcomes were:

- Distribution of workshop report to key interests.
- Better understanding of how the U.S. Department of Agriculture/State Extension Services might engage with the U.S. Climate Change Program and NOAA entities to deliver pertinent information to local decision makers.
- NOAA workshop in Iowa City to discuss gaps in climate and water information related to the severe 2008 flooding in Iowa.
- Closer partnership between NOAA and Iowa State University, Great Plains Institute and Iowa Extension Services.

Partners: Colleges and Universities (including extension services and Haskell Indian Nations University), Department of Interior (U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Reclamation), Army Corps of Engineers, State and Local Governments.

Promoting Social Science Issues Related to Effective Communication of Scientific Information

Why is Weather and Society*Integrated Studies (WAS*IS) important?

The unique geography of NOAA's Central Region makes it a focus for high-impact weather events. High-impact weather events also paint a strong social context nationwide, as the damage produced by these events represents a significant economic impact each year. Promoting social science issues helps to tie advancements in NOAA's science to the public in a way that makes it easier to understand and also creates a lasting impact.

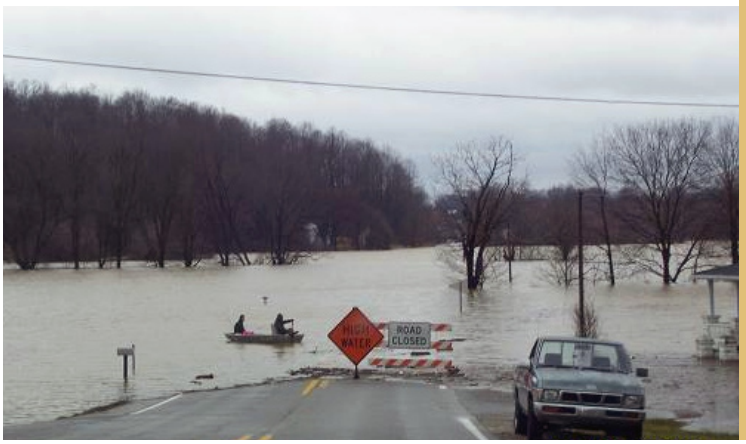
WAS*IS promotes interdisciplinary dialog:

- Among meteorologists and social scientists through monthly WAS*IS webinars on a variety of social science issues related to communicating hazards.
- Through a 3-day workshop at NOAA's Hazardous Weather Testbed in Norman, OK, to better tie social science to cutting-edge weather research.
- Through the 3-year Social Science Woven into Meteorology (SSWIM) initiative funded by NOAA—another centerpiece of the social science theme and the "next steps" of WAS*IS.

Partners: A significant NOAA weather and climate research consortium existing within NOAA's Central Region, Colleges and Universities (including extension services), State and Local Governments, and social scientists (through the National Centers for Atmospheric Research Societal Impacts Program).

PHOTO TOP: Tornado, CREDIT: NOAA

PHOTO BELOW: Flooding, CREDIT: Mike Curran



REGION AT A GLANCE

Thirteen States: Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wyoming

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

773,064 miles^2 of land area

Includes the four largest watersheds in the United States: Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, and Arkansas River watersheds. These freshwater drainage basins greatly affect the complex ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC & CULTURAL CONTEXT

Population: 39,213,877

51 Tribal Governments

The greatest concentration of the strongest tornadoes in the world occurs most frequently across the States of Oklahoma, eastern Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Iowa ("Tornado Alley").

The largest U.S. floods of record have occurred in the region. Those of note include the Great Flood of 1993, the Red River Flood of 1997, and the Iowa/Illinois Floods of 2008.

Represents the "bread basket" of the world. Effects of climate change and water issues have great impact worldwide.

NOAA IN THE CENTRAL REGION

181 NOAA Facilities, Assets, and Capabilities, with over 1,100 employees.

Home to preeminent atmospheric research centers, including the National Severe Storms Laboratory and the Earth Systems Research Laboratory.

The Space Weather Prediction Center offers prediction of solar weather and its effects on Earth systems and technologies.

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